

## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RPA CENTRAL JOINT FORUM

25 August 2006

Present: Nigel Hamilton (Chair) Patricia McKeown  
Andrew McCormick Tom Gillen  
Will Haire Brian Campfield  
Cynthia Smith Pat Torley  
Mary Bunting Kevin McAdam  
John McMillen  
Jim McKeown  
Michael Daly

Apologies: John Hunter John Corey  
Stephen Peover Thomas Mahaffy  
Peter Bunting

### Minutes of the meeting on 28 July

1. Trade Union Side submitted a number of proposed amendments to the draft minutes of the meeting on 28 July for consideration by Management Side.

**Action: Management Side**

### Matters arising from meeting on 28 July 2006

2. The minutes of the meeting on 27 June were cleared with the inclusion of revised wording to paragraph 5. A final version is to be issued.

**Action: Secretariat**

3. TUS advised that there was an agreement that all papers in respect of the CJF should be forwarded to John Corey, Patricia McKeown and Peter Bunting.

**Action: Secretariat**

4. On Communication of Guiding Principles, there was a discussion on the arrangements to be put in place. It was agreed that:

- PSC guiding principles will be published immediately, copied to NIC-ICTU.
- The first two guiding principles will be published;

- Employers will be asked to bring these to the attention of staff and implement them as appropriate;
- Regular bulletins to staff will also be published.

### **Implementation Update**

5. Management Side circulated a paper summarising key developments since the meeting on 28 July.
6. Trade Union Side raised concerns regarding the negotiating arrangements in DE generally in the area of HR. Management Side recognised the concerns and reported that work was on-going to clarify the arrangements.
7. Management Side gave a brief update on the Local Government strand, including the involvement of Trade Unions adding that the next stage would be the drafting of legislation.
8. On legislation, it was reported that the Libraries Order was the most advanced, apart from the staffing provisions. PSC had been offered the draft but they wished to wait until it contained the staffing provisions. It was agreed to copy the current draft to Trade Union Side.

#### **Action: Secretariat**

9. Trade Union Side raised the issue of the new organisations inheriting any funding deficits currently falling to existing organisations. Management Side pointed out that the transfer of functions carried with it a transfer of assets and liabilities and said that there was no reason to expect end year deficits in the HSS Trusts in 2006-07. Trade Union Side stressed the need for clarity in terms of whether deficits were an “RPA” effect rather than due to other factors.

### **Update on PSC Consideration of Submissions**

10. Management Side reported briefly on the recent consideration of submissions by PSC. The main issues discussed were HPSS posts and the definition of the “RPA-affected” Group. The PSC was moving to a preferred position whereby the default position would be that recruitment to new organisations established as a result of RPA decisions would be the “RPA-affected” Group. However, it was explained that this was not straightforward, particularly in an NICS context.
11. Management Side reported that it was likely that the Guiding Principle on Managing Vacancies Effectively would be accepted.
12. The PSC was also concerned that the so-called 4<sup>th</sup> Sector was adequately engaged in the implementation process.

13. Trade Union Side referred to the PSC letter of 21 August and the need for the analysis of equality data to be made available to them.
14. There was a general discussion of the definition of the RPA-affected group during which Trade Union Side highlighted the uncertainty facing staff over the implementation period. It was argued that staff could not decide how to respond to recruitment opportunities until they had assurances regarding their future position. In effect, this meant staff should have an assurance of a job until implementation was completed.
15. On the NICS, Management Side outlined particular difficulties in defining an RPA-affected group and some of the options that were being explored.
16. It was reported that the PSC was expected to issue a draft Guiding Principle on this issue for consultation after its meeting on 30 August. It was agreed that a further meeting of the CJF would need to be scheduled to consider this particular issue.

**Action: Secretariat**

#### **Update on Cross-Sector Group**

17. Management Side updated the meeting on the work of the HR Cross-Sector Group. The main developments were agreement on Terms of Reference, a draft work programme with target dates and a review of membership to ensure the adequate coverage of the so-called 4<sup>th</sup> sector. It was agreed to circulate the Terms of Reference and the draft work programme, the latter to be discussed at the next tri-partite meeting.

**Action: Secretariat**

#### **Equality Update**

18. It was confirmed that, until Congress nominated a permanent official, Patricia McKeown would attend meetings of the Equality Group.
19. Trade Union Side stressed that this was not a substitute for “across the table” discussions.
20. Management Side also reported that the Equality Directorate was represented on both the HR Cross-Sector Group and the Estates Group.
21. On the matter of equality data, Management Side reported that good progress was being made on this.

## **AOB**

22. It was agreed that Trade Union Side would provide comments on the draft bulletin to staff by noon on Wednesday, 30 August.

**Action: Trade Union Side**

23. On communications, Trade Union Side highlighted what they considered to be weaknesses in the extent to which existing websites contained a comprehensive database of documentation. Management Side agreed to take the matter away for consideration.

**Action: Management Side**

## **Date of Next Meeting**

24. The dates and times of the next 4 meetings were confirmed as 22 September, 27 October, 24 November and 15 December all at 11:30am.

**22 September 2006**